

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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KENNEDY URGES STRONG FOOD PROTECTIONS IN TRADE TALKS WITH CHINA

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, Senator Edward M. Kennedy and Democratic lawmakers from the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee sent the below letter to President Bush urging him to pursue strong protections for food safety in talks with Vice Premier Wu Yi of China, who is in the United States this week.

May 21, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We're writing to ask that when talks resume later this week with the Chinese trade delegation, you will pursue strong protections to ensure that persons are not exposed to contaminated and potentially harmful food products. Over the last two months, we've learned the extent to which the globalization of food distribution has placed the American public at risk. The routine use, by Chinese exporters, of the chemical compound melamine to increase profit and mask the actual composition of imported food reveals a reckless disregard for acceptable trading practices.

It's imperative that Vice Premier Wu Yi of the Chinese trade delegation be informed that the status quo is unacceptable. We hope that you will take this opportunity to emphasize our expectation that China will cooperate with the ongoing investigations, and encourage China to take all steps necessary to end these unacceptable practices. The Congress will certainly consider additional measures if it becomes clear that the unsafe and potentially hazardous trading practices continue to plague the importation of food products from China.

With respect and appreciation.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Kennedy

Christopher Dodd

Patricia Murray

Bernie Sanders

Jeff Bingaman